

# Breaking the silence on teen dating violence

# ALERT!

Vol. II, No.1

April, 2001

## INSIDE:



**Thinking  
habits  
that help**

**Dating  
Violence  
Facts**



**BY TEENS to Teens**

**Believe It —  
If You  
Want To!**



**My Dating  
Bill of Rights**

**ALERT!** — a newsletter for people concerned about teen dating violence, is produced by the King County Women's Advisory Board — a program of the King County Department of Community and Human Services.

**This publication is available in  
alternative formats upon request.**

If you have feedback on any part of the ALERT!, we hope that you will contact us and share your ideas. The ALERT! should be what you need it to be! Contact Carole Antoncich at 205-6486 or [carole.antoncich@metrokc.gov](mailto:carole.antoncich@metrokc.gov) for more information.

## Helping young men face up to themselves

Lori and Darrel have been dating for about 6 months. Darrel has always felt jealous when Lori spends time with other people. Last night, when she said that she was going to the beach with some girlfriends for the weekend, Darrel exploded. The trip was fully planned, and he felt a wave of



rage that she would make such huge plans to be away from him without asking whether it was ok with him. He grabbed her by the arm and pushed her against the wall. This morning he's feeling a bit sick as the scene replays through his mind. His mother and dad divorced after years of his dad beating his mom. Is he becoming his father? Is there anyone he can talk to?

Nationally, approaches to working with men to reduce dating and/or domestic violence are limited. Some programs offer anger-management. They help participants learn to recognize that they are angry, cool themselves down, and develop positive conflict management skills. Generally, these programs are not approved as court-ordered treatment for men convicted of battering. Batterers must take part in batterer's or domestic violence treatment, which is more intensive and includes information and exploration of power

and control in relationships.

This treatment is focused on adult men with adult responsibilities — jobs, children, mortgages and the like. Realistically, neither the discussion nor the structure will appeal to or be effective with teen perpetrators. Around the country, groups

are trying new approaches to working with young men. They include school based education programs, community mobilization of men and boys against violence and mentoring for anti-violence.

### Prevention Approaches

In Boston, Massachusetts, the Dating Violence Intervention Program includes assemblies and performances focused on respect. In addition, 3-session courses train students to identify abusive behaviors, use respectful communication and manage conflict. The trainers are former victims and abusers in dating relationships. For youth who have crossed the line into abusive behavior, the program offers weekly counseling groups.

A similar approach is the San Francisco based Men Overcoming Violence (MOVE) Youth Program. Staff work with youth to develop leadership,



Poster from Men Can Stop Rape, D.C.

*continued on page 3*

# thinking habits that work well

from NonViolent Alternatives Counseling Service



**Everybody doesn't have to love me.**  
If someone doesn't not approve of me,  
I will still be ok.

**It is OK to make mistakes.**  
I will accept mistakes in myself and  
also mistakes that others make.

**Other people are OK and I am OK.**  
People who do things that I don't like  
are not necessarily bad people. They  
should not necessarily be punished just  
because I don't like what they do or did.

**I don't have to control things.**

I will survive if things are different than what I want them to  
be. Even if I don't like it, I can live with it.

**I am responsible for my day.**

I am responsible for how I feel and for what I do. It is not the responsibility of  
other people to change so that I can feel better. I am the one who is in charge  
of my life.

**I can handle it when things go wrong.**

The sky won't fall in. Things will be ok.

**I am capable.**

I don't need someone else to take care of my problems. I can take care of myself.

**I can change.**

I don't have to be a certain way because of what has happened in the past.  
It's silly to think I can't help being the way I am. Of course I can.

**I can be flexible.**

There is more than one way to do things. More than one person has good ideas  
that will work.

**I am accountable for my own actions.**

There is nothing another person can say or do that can make me say or so something  
that I know is wrong. I can feel mad or angry and still not say or do anything that  
I will regret or feel guilty about later.

**Two wrongs don't equal one right.**

I don't need to retaliate. Dealing with another's inappropriate behavior by not  
retaliating is a sign of true strength and power.

## Adolescent Dating Violence Facts

- Estimates based on several studies indicate that 28% of teen relationships involve violence.
- Like adult battering, teen dating violence is characterized by its lethality, patterns of domination and control and by its cyclical nature.
- One out of three women murdered in the United States is killed by a husband or boyfriend.
- The FBI reports that 20% of female homicide victims are between the ages of 15 and 24.
- Young women between the ages of 14 and 17 represent an estimated 38% of date rape victims.
- More than 70% of pregnant or parenting teens are beaten by their boyfriends.  
(Barrie Levy, Dating Violence: Young Women in Danger, The Seal Press, 1991)
- The risk of violence to both adolescent and adult women is higher when they are pregnant. In 25% of abusive relationships, the first incident of physical abuse happened when the woman became pregnant.  
(J. MacFarlane, Battering in Pregnancy: The Tip of the Iceberg, Women and Health, 1989)
- Date rape accounts for 67% of the sexual assaults reported by adolescent and college-aged women.  
(Ageton, 1983, Sexual Assault Among Adolescents, Lexington, MA, Heath)
- More than 57% of restraining orders issued against teenagers are concerning a dating relationship.
- The majority, 87% of teenage batterers involved in dating violence are male.
- The location where physical abuse is most frequently reported is in the schools.
- 84% of teenage dating abuse occurring at school involves some type of physical violence.  
(Massachusetts Department of Probation Survey 1994)

# young men facing up to violence

continued from page 1

training and presentation skills, and to "find their own voices against violence and support each other's progress towards change." Youth in the prevention program participate in Popular Theater, a theater form that raises consciousness and builds on participants' own experience to create community norms that oppose dating violence. In addition to training high school peer educators, the Youth Program offers support groups for high school aged young men, and workshops for incarcerated youth at San Francisco's juvenile jail. Intensive long-term counseling is also available to young men who have become violent.

**In Canada,** Men For Change ([www.m4c.ns.ca](http://www.m4c.ns.ca)) have developed the Healthy Relationships Curriculum for use in schools. The curriculum combines knowledge, skills and practice in order to increase positive relationship and conflict resolution skills. Gender stereotypes, gender roles and the portrayal of men and women in the media are also addressed. Men For Change developed the curriculum in the wake of the 1989 murders of engineering students in Montreal by one of their male classmates. They worked with the local school board, the provincial department of health and a national health foundation to build the content. The program is intensive, including up to 75 hours of instruction and activities if fully implemented. It is being used both in Canada and the US in schools, community youth services centers, child welfare agencies and juvenile offender institutions, among others.

## A Unique Intervention Approach

**In Atlanta,** Men Stopping Violence is a community based program offering batterer's intervention programs for adult men. They do not refer to this program as treatment, as they believe that men who are abusive are making a free choice to use abusive and controlling behavior to dominate women. As an outgrowth of this program, they have

developed a program for adolescent men. They believe that young men learn from adult men and the behavior and attitudes that they model. The program initially grew from inviting the men in adult classes to bring their adolescent sons in with them to learn new attitudes. It has expanded to include other adolescent men, who are referred by the courts, by other youth-serving organizations, or by their parents.

Men Stopping Violence (MSV) focuses on modeling positive behavior and communication. Young men experience 5 interventions with MSV. They attend a court class, which is a one-time class for men who have been arrested for simple battery. This gives them the opportunity to see how men react to this experience and seek to justify their behavior. It also provides basic definitions of battering.

---

## Atlanta, San Francisco, and the District of Columbia all have innovative programs focused on teen men who are abusive.

---

They then attend and observe 4 classes with adult men who have battered and are working on changing their personal behavior and being accountable for their actions. Between each class, staff of Men Stopping Violence meet with the youth to process what they are seeing and learning. In the later classes, the youth become more comfortable and participatory in the classes — sharing their experiences either as victims of violence or perpetrators of violence.

Men Stopping Violence provides training, locally and nationally, to other groups seeking to implement their social change model of men working against violence — extensive program information is available on their website at [www.menstoppingviolence.org](http://www.menstoppingviolence.org).

## Community Mobilization

### In the District of Columbia,

Men Can Stop Rape has recently launched a community education campaign based on the theme "My Strength is Not for Hurting."

Aimed at affecting the norms of youth men and promoting positive, non-violent models of male strength, the campaign includes bus and bus shelter ads, posters in schools, mini-magazines for students, and "Safe and Strong" workshops by speakers in schools.

Each of the campaign posters features a heterosexual couple in loving embrace. The central line is: "My strength is not for hurting..."

...so when she said NO, I said OK."

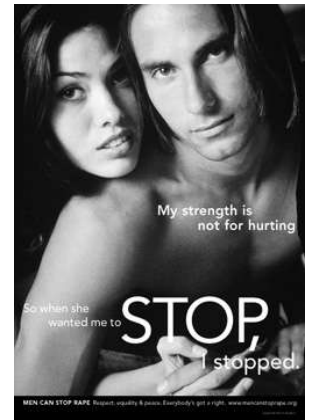
...so when she wanted me to STOP, I stopped."

...so when I wasn't sure how she felt, I asked."

...so when I wanted to and she didn't, we didn't."

A final poster features four professional league soccer players, with text that reads: "Our strength is not for hurting...so when other guys dissed women, we said that's not right."

**Meanwhile, in King County,** Darrel is still feeling shaky, and wondering where he can get some help. Lori won't talk to him, and he's aware that he's becoming someone he doesn't want to be. But according to court and teen advocates there really are no good options for him just yet. No programs focused on teen men who are abusive are currently available in King County. Only a single program reports that they are exploring a program for teen perpetrators of dating violence. Who will step forward? What model will we adopt to help young men and the women they date build healthy and safe relationships?





# Is your partner really changing?

## Some signs your partner is changing:

Has your partner completely stopped saying and doing things which frighten you?

Can you express anger toward your partner without being punished for it?

Does it feel safe to bring up topics that you know upset your partner?

Can your partner listen to your opinion and respect it even when he/she does not agree?

Can your partner argue without being abusive or controlling?

Does your partner respect your wishes about sex and physical contact?

Has your partner stopped expecting you to do things for him/her?

Can you spend time with friends without being afraid that your partner will become upset? Can you do things that are important to you, such as go to school or get a job?

Is your partner being supportive and giving compliments? Does your partner listen to you?

Have the changes been consistent over a long period of time?

Does your partner encourage you to make decisions together?

## Some signs your partner is not changing:

Does your partner use his/her treatment against you in any way?

Does your partner tell you that you are abusive?

Is your partner pressuring you to go to counseling for yourself?

Does your partner tell you that you owe him/her another chance?

Does your partner say that he/she can't change without your support?

Does your partner try to get you or their friends to feel sorry for him/her?

Is your partner making his/her abuse sound like a lot less than it really is?

Does your partner expect something in return from you for the fact that he/she is attending treatment or counseling?

Is your partner pressuring you to make up your mind about the relationship?

Is your partner pressuring you to drop your protection order?

Information compiled by E. Barber, DAWN

Content of this page was contributed by The New Beginnings Peer Educators. Kate Paige, Aliya Greenspan, and Alex Healy participated in its production.

April, 2001

# BY TEENS to Teens



## QUIZ for men: Is Your Relationship Healthy?

1. You're sitting at home while your partner is at the mall, you've paged her every two minutes for the past half an hour because:

- (a) You're in danger and you need a ride to the hospital
- (b) You've got a horrible rash and it won't stop itching
- (c) She said she'd call and you're worried for her safety
- (d) You don't trust her when she's not with you

2. Your partner is starting to think the relationship isn't working out, they want to break things off and you say no because:

- (a) You really love them and you want to work things out
- (b) You really need a date to prom
- (c) You don't want to lose all the new friends you have made from being their partner
- (d) You tell them, "If I can't have you, no one can."

3. Your partner makes some suggestions for plans you have this Saturday, you reject them because:

- (a) You were under the impression that plans had already been agreed upon and were looking forward to what you were going to do
- (b) You already had a bad experience with fish gutting and would prefer to do something else
- (c) They are unappealing to what you would like to do
- (d) You are the one that makes decisions in this relationship and your partner's opinions do not count

4. Your partner is going to go out with someone that makes you jealous, you:

- (a) Tell them how you are feeling and try to compromise
- (b) Go out and do the same thing just to spite them
- (c) Tell them it's "OK" when it really isn't and pout for a week
- (d) Threaten to hurt them or the person they are going to be with

5. One night while you are sitting on the couch, your partner asks about the bad relationships in your past. You tell them:

- (a) You would prefer not to talk about that
- (b) That you are madly in love with them and what happened in the past doesn't matter now
- (c) To pour another drink and start making out
- (d) Those relationships were bad because of the person you were with, and that it wasn't your fault

6. You are ready to have sex with your partner, but they still feel unsure, you:

- (a) Tell them you understand and choose to wait
- (b) Settle for eating chocolate covered strawberries and wine in a candle-lit bathtub
- (c) Throw yourself on the floor and holler at the top of your lungs
- (d) Tell them that if they really loved you they would sleep with you

7. Your partner tells you they feel scared sometimes about what to say or do so they don't make you mad you:

- (a) Are shocked and decide to think and talk about it
- (b) Laugh and tell them they are being ridiculous
- (c) Think of something really mean to say and keep the suspense
- (d) Inform them that they better be on their toes at all times or else

8. You and your partner are sexually active. When they ask for you to use protection you:

- (a) Agree completely and choose to wait until you have proper protection
- (b) Convince them into doing it just this once, you'll never go unprotected again
- (c) Withhold sex until they stop being so paranoid
- (d) Yell at them and tell them if they are concerned about it they are the one that should have it

SCORING: Each (a) answer scores 4; each (b) 3; (c) 2; (d) 1

26-32 Excellent 20-25 Good 14-19 Get Real 8-13 Get Help

ALERT

Insert



# My Dating Bill of Rights

## I Have the Right:

- To trust myself and my instincts
- To ask for a date
- To refuse a date
- To suggest activities
- To refuse any activities, even if my partner is excited about them
- To express my opinions and have them respected
- To be respected as a person
- To disagree
- To make mistakes
- To change my mind
- To have a partner who is faithful
- To have my limits respected
- To tell my partner I want affection
- To refuse affection
- To be listened to
- To be cared about
- To refuse sex with anyone, anytime
- To not be hit, slapped or shoved
- To not be humiliated in public or private
- To break up with someone who hurts me, even if I love them
- To break up with someone who hurts me, even if they love me
- To ask for help if I need it

## I Have the Responsibility:

- To determine my limits
- To respect other people's limits
- To communicate clearly and honestly, if it is safe
- To take care of myself
- To ask for help if I need it

## Did you know?

### Interesting statistics

- 95% of all domestic violence perpetrators are men.
- Every fifteen seconds in the U.S. a man physically assaults a woman.
- 18% of all abusive relationships end in perpetrators killing their victims.
- 78% of all perpetrators start abusing or have been in a relationship where they abused before they are 20 years of age.
- Only 9% of domestic violence perpetrators seek help to change.
- Only 4% of all domestic violence perpetrators actually change their abusive behavior.

Insert

# Believe It – If You Want To!

## But . . .

SCIENTISTS HAVE FOUND NO GENES WHICH MAKE BOYS AGGRESSIVE OR WHICH MAKE GIRLS PUT UP WITH THEM WHEN THEY ARE!

MALE ABILITY TO CHANGE

**THEY'RE IDENTICAL!**

FEMALE ABILITY TO CHANGE

**Amazing but True**



I CAN CHANGE!

## How to help an abuser

1. Call the police if you witness an assault- in many cases the abuser can be required to receive counseling.
2. Tell them that violent behavior is not OK, and that their actions bother you.
3. Offer to talk to them about alternatives to violence; walking away from the situation, talking about the problem, counseling, support group.
4. Tell them that you care about them and provide resources for them to contact.
5. Be a role model for healthy relationships – treat your friends and partner with respect.
6. Take a stand – don't reinforce abusive behavior by laughing, minimizing, or ignoring a threat or an act of violence.
7. Don't agree with any excuses they make for the abuse.
8. Let your friend know about the consequences for violence: legal, school disciplinary action, at risk of losing their relationship and friends.

## Who Can Help?

These agencies can provide crisis response to teens experiencing dating violence:

**Youth Eastside Services:** 425-747-4937 – Ask for Lisa Cordova, Sheri Davis or Belinda Lafferty

**New Beginnings:** 206-783-2848 – ask for Rebecca Yarmuth

**DAWN** (Domestic Abuse Women's Network) – 425-656-8423 X233 – Ask for Ammi

**KCSARC** (King County Sexual Assault Resource Center) – when sexual abuse involved – 1-800-825-7273

**AP ADVICE** @ Asian Counseling & Referral Service: (Asian Pacific-Islanders Against Dating Violence Involving Community Education) – ask for Amy HyunAh Moline – 206-695-7585

Got a question (non-emergency) you need help with? **Ask Nicole at:** [dearnicoleadvice@hotmail.com](mailto:dearnicoleadvice@hotmail.com)

**ALERT**

**April, 2001**

# Recognize the Early Warning Signs for Perpetrators of Dating Violence

Young perpetrators who emotionally, physically or sexually assault their partners often do not fit our stereotypes of the aggressive or angry partner. There are all types of perpetrators; some are loudly aggressive, while others are passive in public. Some are gregarious, while others are loners. Many are attractive and popular model students from model families. Often the victim is not believed when he/she reports the abuse if violence does not fit the picture that others have for the abuser. It is important for professionals to look beyond the student's academic and social reputations when they investigate reports of abuse. Following are some signs to look for in potential perpetrators.

## The victim or their friend report abuse or threats

Remember, there are all types of victims too. A common problem for rape victims is that their perpetrator has a stronger reputation than they do, reducing their credibility. Do not be swayed by public image.

## Alcohol or drug use

Some perpetrators rely on alcohol or drugs to release them from their normal inhibitions or to give them "courage" to become more aggressive towards their partners. Alcohol and drug use is often used in gang rapes to help perpetrators "forget the rules" or to play the victim.

## Possessive or jealous behavior toward girlfriend

Whether in public or private, possessiveness and jealous accusations often precede and follow violence. The abusive partner will often attempt to socially isolate his/her victim by "forbidding her" to see or talk to others or by making frequent accusations of infidelity which force the victim to limit his/her social life in order to appease the abuser.

## Involvement with younger partners

Males or females who habitually date younger people may do so because they feel they can be more dominant than with partners who are the same age or older.

## Harassment or threats toward partner or former partner

Failure to accept the breakup of a relationship is a common indicator of abuse. Often, victims are abused or threatened when they try to end the relationship.

## Suicide attempts or threats of suicide over a relationship

Suicidal gestures or threats can be intended to manipulate the victim into remaining in the relationship. In some cases these threats can be accompanied by physical abuse or threats of homicide.

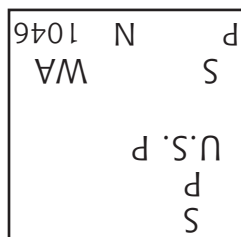
## Marked changes in mood or personality

Extreme agitation, depression, social withdrawal or aggressiveness can be tip-offs to relational conflict or violence.

Information adapted from The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Teen Dating Violence Resources Manual, 1997 — and provided by the **New Beginnings Teen Program** 206-783-2848



## Tools to combat teen dating violence



King County Women's Advisory Board  
821 Second Ave., Suite 500  
Seattle, WA 98104-1502